



CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS RESOURCE PACK

SECTION B PRAYER AND PREPARATION

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE MAJORITY OF RESOURCES AND WEBSITES LISTED THROUGHOUT THIS RESOURCE ARE NOT PROVIDED OR MAINTAINED BY THE DIOCESE OF DERBY. YOU ARE THEREFORE ADVISED TO CHECK SITES AND RESOURCES CAREFULLY BEFORE USING THEM WITH SCHOOLS OR CHURCHES

1. PRAY FOR YOUR SCHOOLS

Before any plans are made, times of prayer are so important. We need to ask for God's blessing and wisdom as we seek to make contact with the schools in our community.



Firstly, list the schools and places of education in your area or parish. You might already be aware of where Primary and Secondary schools are, but you can find out much more information about these places simply by having a look at the school website.

Secondly, you could find out about Nurseries and pre-school groups which meet in your area. A chat to any family with children under school age might help you discover where these groups are. Libraries and Community Halls often have information about these groups as well.

Maybe you will discover college or university sites in your area, or even accommodation which is used by students.

If you are struggling to identify all your local schools and places of education please contact Sarah.brown@derby.anglican.org A list of these is held in Church House.

IDEAS

There are many ways in which you could pray. Perhaps as part of your intercessions on Sunday, you could pray for one local school. Mention the Head Teacher, all the staff, Governors and children as part of the intercessions.

<https://www.prayforschools.org/resources/>

A group of Christian organisations which include Scripture Union, Youth for Christ and Care have produced a range of useful resources to help you pray for schools.

This prayer is called their "bookmark prayer". You could keep a copy of it inside your Bible or somewhere where you will see it regularly.



Prayer for our Schools – our bookmark prayer

Loving Father, Thank you for all who are part of our school. Please grant them your encouragement, wisdom and peace.

Strengthen teachers with heavy workloads. May they be firm, yet patient, expecting excellence but forgiving mistakes.

May they support their students, playing to strengths, helping with struggles and motivating them to do their best.

Comfort and restore those living under shadows of unhappiness, abuse, pain or fear. May many find faith discovering their identity in You and knowing Your amazing grace in their lives.

Please pour out Your blessings upon our whole school community.

In Jesus name.

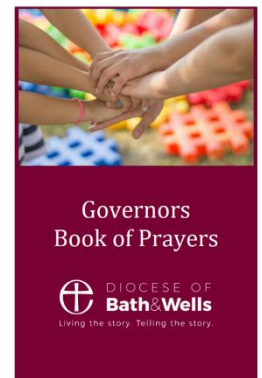
Amen

PRAYER WALKING

This video clip describes some ways that you could take part in a Prayer Walk around your area to pray for local schools.

<https://youtu.be/KjRGg9AHlbA>

There are other prayers available: for example, this booklet from the [Diocese of Bath and Wells is aimed at School Governors](#) and would be very useful for anyone taking this role. Many of the prayers would also be suitable for anyone as they pray for a school



The Church of England's "Everyday Faith" Portal could be another source of ideas for prayer day by day.

<https://everydayfaith.churchofengland.org/s/all-topics>

The "10 Ways to Pray for Schools" shown below can be downloaded and used as a reminder of things to pray about.



10 WAYS TO PRAY FOR SCHOOLS

- 1 KEEPING SCHOOLS SAFE**
Search for peace, and work to maintain it. The eyes of the Lord watch over those who do right, and His ears are open to their prayers. 1 Peter 3:11-12 (NLT)
 God our Saviour, please keep our schools safe and secure, protected from accidents and other problems. Restrain anyone who might cause harm to children and adults in any way.
Amen
- 2 TEACHING STAFF**
The Teacher very carefully studied and set in order many wise teachings... that are dependable and true. Ecclesiastes 12:8 (and Children's Bible)
 Lord, please strengthen teachers and help them to be firm, patient, expecting excellence but forgiving of mistakes. May they support students and motivate them to do their best.
Amen
- 3 PUPILS FULFILLING THEIR POTENTIAL**
May He grant your heart's desires and make all your plans succeed. Psalm 20:4 (NLT)
 Father, please help children to benefit from all aspects of school life: the environment and ethos, academic learning, music, arts, sport and provision for spiritual and emotional wellbeing.
Amen
- 4 ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF**
Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. 1 Peter 4:11 (NLT)
 God our helper, please bless and unite all those whose expertise and enthusiasm contribute so much to the smooth running of our schools.
Amen
- 5 EDUCATION PLANS AND POLICIES**
Pray especially for... governments to rule well so we can be quiet about our business of living simply. 1 Timothy 2:2,3 (Message)
 Lord, please grant wise discernment to those nationally and locally who make far-reaching decisions, and provide funding, guidance and support to schools across the UK.
Amen
- 6 RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE)**
Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honourable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Philippians 4:8 (NLT)
 Loving God, please help teachers as they undertake the task of teaching RSE in primary and secondary schools. May their lessons be appropriately, informative and unbiased.
Amen
- 7 CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS**
Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart. Matthew 11:30 (NLT)
 Lord Jesus, please help children in school who are facing many kinds of challenges and equip and encourage their teachers and carers.
Amen
- 8 VULNERABLE CHILDREN**
Do the right thing for the weak and those without a father. Stand up for the rights of those suffering and in need. Psalm 82:3 (New Life Version)
 Father, please come near to young people living in the shadows of unhappiness, abuse, pain or fear. Bring new hope to any who are desperate and draw them into the circle of Your love.
Amen
- 9 CORONAVIRUS' EFFECT ON SCHOOLS**
The Lord is close to all who call on Him... He grants the desires of those who fear Him. He hears their cries for help and rescues them. Psalm 145:18,19 (NLT)
 Lord, please provide our teachers and pupils with all they need in the aftermath of Covid-19. Help children to readjust and catch up on their missed learning, especially those most affected by lockdown.
Amen
- 10 CHRISTIAN STUDENTS AND STAFF**
You are the light of the world... let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father. Matthew 5:14-16 (NLT)
 Dear Jesus, please inspire and equip those in our schools who love You to be faithful, loving, bold and wise ambassadors for the gospel, through their words and lives wherever they are.
Amen

PRAY FOR SCHOOLS

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An initiative of CARE in England and Wales, in partnership with:

- Youth for Christ
- Scripture Union
- Free Churches Group
- Association of Christian Teachers
- Prayer Spaces in Schools
- Open the Book

CARE, 35, Springwood Street, SW9 5DF (020 7333 0445) mail@care.org.uk

PRAYER AS THE BEGINNING AND THE END?

Read Luke 18:1-8

Jesus tells a story about how a Judge who cared little about anyone eventually gave in to a widow who wore him down by her persistent asking for her request to be heard. He makes that point about how God is so much more caring and loving than that judge. We have nothing to fear, and must be persistent in our prayer, knowing that God always hears us.

There are times for all of us when physical action perhaps seems impossible. Maybe we find walking around difficult, perhaps it's hard to do practical tasks at the moment. This story in Luke's gospel teaches us that persistent prayer is vitally important. Whatever situation we are in, if we are feeling "all I can do is sit and pray" we should know that this is the most important task of all.



So, if our congregation is small and perhaps elderly in number, consider whether you could become the persistent pray-ers which Jesus calls for?

There is no greater task!

B) 2. CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS – VISITING A SCHOOL: SAFEGUARDING

It's important that your first contact with a school is appropriate! Remember that the staff of the school will rightly be wary of an unknown person or group who ask to visit. Even if you are from a local church and visiting "your" Church of England school it's important to remember that you will only go at the invitation of the Head, and that you will only do the things and be in the places that have been agreed before you visit.

The [Church of England website](#) has useful information.

Before you visit a school you must make contact and speak to a senior leader about the safeguarding actions that will need to be in place. Below is a selection of advice from the NSPCC (full article is [here](#)) There will be other useful documents too, including the [Parish Safeguarding Handbook](#)

- Make sure you understand and follow the school's processes for visitors, whichever capacity you are visiting in.
- Confirm the date and time of your visit with the school. Make sure you know who to ask for when you arrive.
- Be prepared to share the safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures of your church in advance.
- The school will need to check that your safeguarding measures meet their standards. If your church follows the instructions around Safer Recruiting in the [Parish Safeguarding Handbook](#) (see p.13 - 15) this will normally be acceptable to schools.
- Make sure you have completed the online safeguarding training modules according to this [matrix](#).
- Read and sign any additional safeguarding information which the school wishes you to be aware of. Be certain who you would speak to if you have a concern about any child or adult in the school.



- Be prepared to wear a lanyard which identifies you as an official visitor. If you are part of a team who visit schools regularly, your team badge, tee shirt or lanyard is an important part of identification.
- Assume that you may not take photos of any children.

During the visit

- Be prepared to show identification when you arrive.
- Follow the school's code of conduct.
- Only go into areas of the school you've been permitted to enter. Staff might invite you into the staff room, but don't assume you can go in and make yourself comfortable!
- You should only be alone with children if the school has given you permission. If you are working one-to-one with a child, make sure you put the appropriate safeguarding measures in place such as working in a visible location.

If you identify a safeguarding or child protection concern

- Report it by following both the school's and your own procedures.
- Keep a record of your concern.

If you need to change an arrangement because of illness or any other reason, make sure that you contact the school as early as possible. If a teacher is relying on you to do a particular activity he or she will need to alter plans if you are unavailable.

Aim to be as reliable as you can in your school visits!

School reception requirements can seem like a lot to think about. Make sure you have everything ready, and help check others in your team too.



B3 What could you offer?

Whether you have good or bad memories of your schooldays, one thing you can be sure of is that today's school will seem very different from the one you remember. If you can, talk to others about this, especially when you find some of the modern ways of working a little strange or baffling!

If you remember any of the scenes below, you are going to notice a lot of changes in schools today!



A good question to ask at the start is, “How can we help?” If you already have an idea of what you are thinking of doing, by all means mention this, but be prepared for the school to say, “No thank you”.

Depending on the age and talents of those who are offering to help, you might want to put together a list of the things that you could offer.

All schools have lots of “non glamorous” jobs which often fall outside everyone’s job description – maybe you could help with one or two of these? (But make sure that another group isn’t already involved, such as a PTA.)

- Helping to maintain a school garden, pond or wildlife plot
- Suppling homemade cake for events
- Helping at lunchtimes, cutting out, photocopying, mounting pictures
- Helping to organise a 2nd hand clothing sale



- Organising parking for events
- Serving coffee to carers/parents at parents' evenings, concerts etc
- Putting up Christmas decorations in the Hall, Reception and communal areas (and taking down and storing at the end of Autumn term!)
- Helping to tidy or sort books in the library
- Helping children with reading or another subject
- Sharpen pencils and checking classroom equipment.

After you have done a non-glamorous job for a while and got to know the staff and children a little, it might be that you and you group feel you have skills for a lunchtime or after school club. Once again, check that no-one else is already offering the same activity. Here are few to start you thinking...



- A gardening club
- Help with PE/Sport
- Helping with Art or Music
- Knitting, crochet or sewing
- Lunchtime book club (these could include Bible books)
- An After school Messy or activity club
- A breakfast and activity club

Obviously, if you are running or helping with a club like this, you must be committed to being there every time you are expected. If you are unwell, you will need to arrange a substitute so that the club can still run safely.

B4 GOVERNANCE

You don't have to be a parent or guardian of a child in the school in order to be a Governor.

Every school has a governing body of between seven and 20 members. They are the strategic leaders of schools and have a vital role to play in making sure every child gets the best possible education. The governing body consists of:

- parents
- school staff
- nominees from the local authority
- people from the local community.



There are many different roles for Governors, some depending on the type of school involved. Here is an excerpt from an [article](#) which explains something about Governors and Governing bodies.

“This role gives you the opportunity to support young people, improve educational standards and give back to your local community. Becoming a school governor also makes you part of one of the largest bodies of volunteers in the country as there are currently over a quarter of million volunteer governors across England!



A governor supports the management of the school in areas such as strategy, policy, budgeting, and staffing to make sure that the school is working effectively. Governors set the aims and objectives for a school, monitor and evaluate performance, oversee the financial management, and ensure that the headteacher and staff are following its vision and strategic direction. The diverse and varied nature of the role means that schools need governors who can bring a range of knowledge, skills, and experiences.”

For information about becoming a Foundation Governor at a Church of England school in Derbyshire please see the Board of Education website under [Governance](#).

For other schools in Derby City see [here](#)

For other schools in Derbyshire see [here](#)

There is an online training available for Church of England and distinctively Christian schools available at [Liverpool Hope University](#).